

Appl. No. 10/015,848
Amendment and/or Reply
To the Office action of 2 September 2005

Page 7 of 8

3. REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1, 2, 6-11, 13, 14 and 16-18 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 10 and 13 are in independent form.

Unless indicated otherwise, claims are amended for non-statutory reasons: to correct one or more informalities, remove figure label number(s), and/or to replace European-style claim phraseology with American-style claim language.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowability of claims 4, 9, 12, 15 and 18. The subject matter of claims 4, 12 and 15 has been incorporated into claims 1, 10 and 13, respectively. Thereby all pending claims are believed to be allowable.

III. Objections to Claims 1-9

The amendment to claim 1 is believed to overcome the objection thereto and thus overcomes the rejection of claims 1-9.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as lacking antecedent basis. This claim has been cancelled rendering this rejection moot.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and § 103(a)

The rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and § 103(a) are moot in view of the present amendment.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, applicant(s) respectfully request(s) that the Examiner withdraw the objection(s) and/or rejection(s) of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that

Atty. Docket No. GB010002

Appl. No. 10/015,848
Amendment and/or Reply
To the Office action of 2 September 2005

Page 8 of 8

may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 50-0238 for any additional fees, including, but not limited to, the fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. §1.17.

Respectfully submitted,



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Atty. Docket No. GB010002